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PRESS CONFERENCE
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN
JULY 18, 1974

Thank you very much Paul. It's nice to be home and I welcome all my traveling friends to Grand Rapids, God's gift to the United States. I think we probably ought to just proceed.

Q---Mr. Vice President, for sometime now you have been saying that the President should turn over to the House Judiciary Committee the evidence it has been seeking once it has seen the evidence _____.
Isn't it time for the President to turn over the rest of the evidence?

A---I think that matter to some extent is being litigated in the Supreme Court. I wish that the President would turn over that which is construed to be relevant without the benefit of the Court Order, but he has taken a course of action that he and his counsel think is the right one, so it's up to the Court and his counsel to make a decision.

Q---

A---As you may have noticed, I said to some extent it is being litigated. Because it is my understanding that if the Supreme Court rules against the President and for Jaworski, Judge Sirica could, if he wished, in turn turn those tapes over to the Committee. So I was very careful in the way I phrased my answer.

Q---

A---I have repeatedly said publicly and I've indicated to the White House

that I think that ought to be the procedure. The decision has been made otherwise. It is their decision and if the committee wants to proceed in other legal ways, they have the right to do so.

Q----Are you supporting anybody in the Congressional primary here?

A----I respect the usual procedure that I don't get involved in primaries. I do approve, however, of the procedure which was used in order to back a designated candidate, but until the primary is over, I will not get involved.

Q----

A----I didn't arrange the group that met me at the airport. I was glad to see Paul, however.

Q----

A----Surely.

Q----

A----I never objected to Mr. VanderVeen bringing in the group from Boston. What I objected to was the group of outside labor political organizers who came from the Pennsylvania election and then came to Grand Rapids, and subsequently move on to Cincinnati and Saginaw. I never objected to Mr. VanderVeen bringing in an outside public relations firm.

Q----Your remarks at that time, however, were not interpreted that way_____.

A----Well, I can only assure you that what I was objecting to was the highly sophisticated, very well organized, outside labor politicians who made this traveling circuit from Pennsylvania to Grand Rapids to Cincinnati and on to

Saginaw. If somebody wants to bring in somebody from the outside for public relations expertise, I have no objection.

Q----- why VanderVeen won?

A----I can't give you any definitive answer on why he won except there were a combination of things and nobody has really made any exact science of how one person defeats another.

Q-----

A----Of course.

Q-----

A----I read the article, the gallup poll that showed the Democrats had gained one percentage point, the Republicans I think have dropped two or three. There was over the last two or three reporting periods a substantial increase in independent voters which is the most significant point which I think one can get from that article. This has been my personal observation without taking a poll. People generally are far more independent, they don't associate themselves with political parties to the extent today as they formerly did. So I think what the leaders, the politicians in both political parties must do, is to have programs that will appeal to the independents. The Democrats don't have a majority according to that poll. Certainly the Republicans don't. But the independents are the string and I think either political party that expects to win must appeal to the independent voter.

Q-----

A----Well, I'm not sure I'll go out and campaign for a Democrat, but what I'll

do is not go into these districts where I think there's a first class Democrat who over the years from my personal observations has done a fine job. I will be highly selective as I campaign around the country this fall.

Q----

A----We haven't analyzed it in detail yet, but if we accept speaking engagements, I do note who the individuals are that are the Democratic candidates and I think for good and sufficient reasons, we are carefully making note of that fact.

Q----

A----I can't give you any specific individual, but intuitively, Mr. Zimmerman, I understand who they are.

Q----In the evidence released today by the Judiciary Committee said that President Nixon approved after-the-fact the break-in of Dr. Fieldings' Office. If that's true, do you think that impeachment is warranted?

A----Well, I haven't seen the evidence to that effect. Will you repeat what you said was a fact?

Q----It said that President Nixon approved of the break-in of Dr. Fieldings' Office after the fact despite his denial.

A----Who said that now?

Q----The House Judiciary Committee in evidence released today. _____
_____.

A----And your question now?

Q----Do you think that warrants impeachment?

A----I don't think that in itself warrants impeachment, no sir.

Q----

A----As far as I'm concerned, I have an independent right to make my own judgment on the evidence and its relationship to the impeachment provision in the Constitution. Each citizen and each member of Congress has that right and unless I am convinced otherwise, and as of now I'm not, I will maintain my present position.

Q----

A----I'll give you as I have done in the past what I think the odds are based on the evidence today that the House will not impeach the President. I am not going to get into a numbers game. This is my observation, it is today, it has been for the last month.

Q-----odds are based on the evidence. Are you saying it's your belief that he should not be impeached based on the evidence or are you saying that your judgment, knowing the Republicans on the Committee, they will not vote for impeachment?

A----It is my personal judgment that he should not be impeached by the House, and it is my judgment that the House itself will not do so because the evidence does not justify impeachment.

Q----

A----Well, I didn't use the term spoon-feeding. It's my judgment as I said

many times before the White House ought to give to the Committee any and all relevant evidence including tapes themselves or transcripts, thereof. If this had been done earlier there wouldn't be any allegations such as you have repeated.

Q----Yesterday Representative McClory said judging by all the people that are in jail that were working in the White House, this is no way to run the White House, no way to run the Administration. Judging by your own standards of ethics and morality, has President Nixon run the White House the way you think he should?

A----I'm not going to pass judgment on people that he has appointed, for those who have made mistakes, they will pay the penalty. On the other side of the coin, the President made some very excellent appointments; Dr. Kissinger, as his foreign policy advisor, an outstanding appointment, former Congressman Laird, as Secretary of Defense. Those are the kind of people that I approve of and they are the kind of people that I think ought to be the standard for those who serve a President.

Q----But judging from your own standards of ethics and morality, how has President Nixon run the White House?

A----I think on the overall from the point of view of foreign policy, he's done a superb job. I've said many times there are more pluses than minuses in the handling of domestic affairs.

Q----What are the minuses?

A----Well, I think we've had too much inflation, but I can't say that the President is totally responsible for it. The Congress is as much a culprit if not more so than the President as far as inflation is concerned. This is

the major area where I think the Administration hasn't done as well as it should.

Q----What about Watergate. Is that a minus? Is the President not (Interruption by the Vice President)

A----Well, I think you have to admit that Watergate has been a very sad and tragic affair in the history of the United States.

Q----How's that?

A----I think the President, once he learned on March 21 of the coverup, took action. That's my judgment, based on the evidence. I think it's tragic and sad that it was initiated by people that he trusted. Unfortunately, they made serious mistakes and when he found out about it and found that John Dean was lying and hadn't given him the full information, he took action against Dean.

Q----

A----I'm not going to be critical of what Mr. Wiersma has said, and I have nothing to do with the establishment of the committee, but I've looked at the names of the members on that committee and they are a very good cross-section of the Republican Party in this area, both geographically, philosophically, agewise and otherwise. I'm not going to criticize the people who were asked to do a job and I think it was a very thorough and a very fair and constructive job. I think under the circumstances, it was the proper way to do it. That everybody regardless of the establishment of that committee has a right to run in a primary and there will be a free vote and the results will make the determination.

Q----

A----I have I think read, heard, or otherwise absorbed the various material that has been submitted to the Judiciary Committee. There are some differences in the transcripts, but I've also listened to several of those tapes where there are these alleged discrepancies and if anybody can be 100% certain that their version is any more accurate than another version, I think you have to be a genius, and I think there's some honest difference. And I think that's understandable because of the texture of the transcripts, of the tapes themselves.

Q----I may be wrong, but I don't think you had indicated you had listened to the tapes before now. Can you tell us under what circumstances that occurred?

A----I asked to hear several of them and as a result I did.

Q----At the White House?

A----No, not at the White House.

Q----At the Judiciary Committee?

A----No, not at the Judiciary Committee.

Q----Where sir?

A----I don't think that's material.

Q----Sir, you said a few weeks ago (Interruption by the Vice President)

A----On one occasion I listened to them at the White House, on another I listened to them elsewhere.

Q----_____ dates?

A----I can't recall the exact dates, no.

Q----Sir, what persuaded you, you have said over the months you didn't want to hear the tapes. _____?

A----Well, this was after the discrepancy arose, and it was of my interest to find out the quality of the tapes and after listening to parts of two of them, I came to the conclusion that it is very understandable that there could be a different interpretation of the words that were spoken.

Q----

A----I think you could read it either way.

Q----

A----I don't recall.

Q----

A----Very simple answer, very understandable answer. We got these different versions, they were publicized and as a result of that I had an opportunity.

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